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US MILITARY STRATEGY FOR REGIONAL WAR IN THE PERIOD 1970-1980

By

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U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE

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✓ US Military Strategy for Regional
War in the Period 1970-1980

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8 April 1966

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SUMMARY

The United States is approaching the critical decade of the Seventies in an environment of international tension of unprecedented danger. Every aspect of national power must be employed to meet the challenge of subversive and aggressive Communism.

Military strategy must implement national security policy based on national objectives. An important part of this strategy will have to be directed toward regional war. The goal of this strategy must be to further US foreign policy and to deter and curb Communist aggression while avoiding general war. Regional strategy will have to guarantee US freedom of action and must be based on the primacy of vital interests. Among the types of strategy available are containment, roll-back, withdrawal, and aggression. A flexible combination of the first two appears desirable, resulting in strategy based on the theory of alternate means within a framework of dynamic stability.

In the Seventies military strategy must apply the theory of alternate means throughout a broad spectrum of modern warfare, including regional war. Regional war will involve vital interests and will probably represent major commitment. It can be kept limited if constraints (in area, weapons, targets, or objectives) are mutually recognized by the belligerents.

The greatest danger in regional war is escalation to nuclear general war; and, therefore, a deterrent posture is of crucial significance. Forward deployment and maximum use of mutual security arrangements are essential. Ideally, the use of nuclear weapons will be limited to response-in-kind; first-use, based on conventional force weakness, is unacceptable, but this may be necessary unless the current posture is improved.

Five regions form the rimlands of Eurasian Communism: Europe, the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Far East. Although each has its regional characteristics and specifics, a summary of limited war aspects in each indicates common elements of strategy.

Concurrent regional (limited) wars are possible and strategy must include provisions for such an eventuality. The world and regional balances of power are interdependent and military strategy will dictate that the United States maintain favorable balances in each.

Based on regional summaries of military strategy requirements, strategic tenets of general application for regional wars can be developed. These include: primacy of efforts against Communism; maintenance of general war capability; preservation of favorable power balances; provision for concurrent wars; reliance on mutual security; flexible deterrence; forward deployment; maintenance of adequate strategic lift; development of sizable and responsive reserve forces; prepositioning equipment; limitation of conflict; restrictions on the use of nuclear weapons; development of adequate conventional force; maintenance of freedom of action; and avoidance of emergency shifting of deployed forces to other regions.

Finally, military strategy for regional war in the 1970's will be based on the alternate means of selective containment and collateral exploitation to support or create dynamic stability, consistent with overall national objectives and national security policy.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE

As the United States approaches the critical decade of the Seventies, it is increasingly apparent that the worldwide struggle for power which has overshadowed the aspirations of Twentieth Century man will accelerate to unprecedented intensity. Militant Communism will remain the principal threat, with instabilities caused by upheavals in the emerging nations, population expansion, aggressive nationalism, and nuclear proliferation. Bases of power will include every aspect of national and international life-- political, sociological, psychological, economic, technological, and military. National strategy, since it is the expression of policy, must incorporate these same aspects. Failure of US leaders to recognize this integrated nature of modern strategy and to conduct national affairs accordingly could jeopardize the achievement of national policy goals.¹

Internationally, the threat or application of military strength will be the most important operative power factor. Military power will be more frequently employed in its threatening role in support of policy than in its active operational role.²

¹ William R. Kintner, "The Politicalization of Strategy," Marine Corps Gazette, Vol. 49, Apr 1965, p. 21.

² Ibid.

The strategy employed in organizing, enunciating, and applying military strength will be central to the success of US national policy. Dean Acheson stated the overriding task of modern military strategy as the restraint and control of military power for legitimate political ends.³ This power must be tailored to political objectives and employed so as to prevent misunderstanding of the precise political goals to be attained.⁴ But just as military strategy cannot be formulated in isolation and must be correlated with policy, so must policy consider military capabilities and limitations.⁵ Accordingly, military policy and strategy must be placed together in a perspective of reality and consistency as well as compatibility with national objectives and goals.⁶

UNITED STATES OBJECTIVES AND POLICY

National security policy, like the strategy which guides its execution, is valid only insofar as it supports the national objectives. The national objectives of the United States can be expressed in many ways, but are summarized briefly by stating that they envision for each individual his natural rights to dignity,

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Dean G. Acheson, Power and Diplomacy, pp. 36-46.

⁴US Air Force Academy, Dept of Political Science, American Defense Policy, p. 233.

⁵Robert E. Osgood, Limited War: the Challenge to American Strategy, p. 23.

⁶James M. Gavin, War and Peace in the Space Age, p. 251.

freedom, and well-being and, ultimately, the legitimate projection of these rights to all mankind. To achieve these broad objectives the United States has established a republican government of law, the security of which has become both a primary objective and a central purpose for acquisition and maintenance of worldwide military primacy.

In the ancient struggle between the policies of imperialism and preservation of the status quo, the United States has chosen a course offset from either--a course which rejects imperialism but envisions growth of freedom and improved society for hundreds of millions still oppressed by tyranny, poverty, and ignorance. This course, nurtured by wellsprings of Western democracy, is aimed at the hearts and minds of men everywhere. It ultimately must establish and govern US policy and, hence, must form the basis for national strategy in applying each of the factors of power.

THREAT AND CHALLENGE

Opposing the fruition of US policy in the Seventies will be the implemented philosophy of world Communism, with its goals of frustrating the Western world, building socialism and Communism, supporting "wars of liberation," winning over the emerging world, and, ultimately, establishing world hegemony.⁷

⁷ Pravda Editorial, "The Aims of Soviet Foreign Policy," Survival, October 1965, Vol. VII, No. 7, p. 253.

With the dramatic growth of its Asiatic base and refinement of its technological assets, the Communist power structure will increase inexorably until only the unrelenting purpose and strength of the United States can contain its pressure. Garthoff writes:

. . . the major role of Soviet political and military strategy /will be/ deterring the West from launching war, and the next most important /will be/ counter-detering the West from effective reactions to Communist advances short of war.⁸

In form, the Communist threat will not change greatly. "The idea of war as a continuation of political intercourse . . . /will be/ the very essence of Communist theory and practice."⁹ The overriding danger of total war will remain as will the possibility of regional wars. Perhaps the greatest danger of confrontation and conflict will be in the peripheral areas where the turmoil of emergent development can be exploited by Communism as a means of enlarging its sphere of influence. In these areas Communists excel at their traditional indirect approach with strategies of protracted conflict aimed at conclusive victory by increments of subsidiary wars and nonviolent campaigns.¹⁰ Finally, the totality of Communist war theory overshadows all other considerations. The Communist leadership thinks in total political terms, and "warfare is most political when it is least (traditionally) warlike."¹¹

⁸ Raymond L. Garthoff, The Soviet Image of Future War, p. 5.

⁹ Osgood, op. cit., p. 53.

¹⁰ Robert Strausz-Hupe, William R. Kintner, Stefan T. Possony, A Forward Strategy for America, p. 4.

¹¹ James D. Atkinson, The Edge of War, p. 190.

The fundamental problem will be to develop strategy which is a true long-range counter to centralized overall direction of Communist expansionism.¹² Only the vigilant, forceful application of US total strategies can challenge the militant and multiple threat. The importance of the formulation of these strategies, a strong consensus for their support, and a vigorous development of means for their execution is manifest. As Beaufre has written, "Preparation is of more consequence than execution."¹³

¹²George E. Lowe, The Age of Deterrence, p. 55.

¹³Andre Beaufre, An Introduction to Strategy, p. 45.

CHAPTER 2

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

STRATEGY AND THE THEORY OF VITAL INTEREST

Military strategy must be based on the primacy of vital interests. Stringent, incisive, and realistic assessment must be made to determine what these vital interests really are before any supporting strategy can be developed. The strategic goal must be to further national foreign policy and to discourage and curb the enemy's aggressions while avoiding total war.¹

To achieve maximum effectiveness, strategy must be total. A purely military viewpoint is therefore incomplete and misleading.²

The essence of regional strategy is securing freedom of action while denying such freedom to the opponent. Freedom of action is determined by material and moral force, time, and space. Strategy is evolutionary and dynamic--a continuous process of original thinking which incorporates the entire range of national disciplines. The ideas which result from this process must be the dominant and guiding force of national strategy.³

Although vital interests must be globally integrated, the specifics of strategy can best be developed geographically by

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²Bernard Brodie, Strategy in the Missile Age, p. 314.

²Andre Beaufre, An Introduction to Strategy, p. 133.

³Ibid., pp. 135-138.

regions. In determining vital interests, it is essential to consider national objectives in order to rationalize the acceptability and essentiality of these interests. For example, the nation has readily accepted the preservation of a viable, free Western Europe as essential to US security and to the projection of the Western philosophy of the rights of man; whereas, there has been a reluctance in some quarters to accept extensive American commitment in Southeast Asia. The difference simply results from evaluations regarding the true identity of American vital interests. The strength of the opponent will limit expenditure of resources to secure interests which are not vital. Similarly, this opposing strength, coupled with regional factors, will determine the degree of commitment where national interests are significant but not vital. It is essential that military strategy be formulated only after national political decisions are made regarding the importance of specific countries or regions.⁴ Finally, the theory of vital interest must be integrated with US policy of nonimperialistic abrogation of the status quo described above.

THEORY OF ALTERNATE MEANS

Strategy, says Beaufre, is a method of thought, which codifies and chooses courses of action.⁵ In executing US foreign policy,

⁴James M. Gavin, War and Peace in the Space Age, p. 251.

⁵Beaufre, op. cit., p. 13.

particularly in protracted confrontation with the Communist camp, it is imperative to adopt a "grand national strategy" which can be translated into effective and realistic incremental strategies.⁶ Essential consistency must be tempered with flexibility to exploit changes in regional power balances and transitory weaknesses of the opponents.

In the recent (post World War II) past, US grand strategy has been one of "containment," aimed at blocking the further advance of Communist power. The Truman Doctrine and later the Eisenhower Doctrine were political manifestations of this strategy. The means used have included alliances, deployed military forces, and the threat of military force. It is significant that the policy of massive nuclear retaliation as a deterrent threat to enforce containment has been replaced by a policy of balanced deterrent⁷ which has made limited war possible.

Since the adoption of a strategic containment policy the United States has been successful in blocking the physical expansion of Communism. Containment in Lebanon, Greece, West Berlin, Korea, and South Vietnam has included some degree of military action; Cuba was a defeat for a Communist attempt to hurdle the containing shield.

⁶Samuel P. Huntington, The Common Defense, pp. 15-20.

⁷Arthur I. Waskow, "The Limits of Defense," Atlantic, Vol. 209, Feb 1962, p. 83.

Most strategists today support containment; Osgood writes:

The logic of the cold war and the concrete experience of the last decade indicate that America's overall strategy should be the containment of the Communist sphere of control by our readiness to oppose aggression with a variety of means under a variety of circumstances. Containment is based upon assumptions about the nature of Communist conduct that have been confirmed in practice. It is a feasible strategy, compatible with our basic political objectives and our power to attain them. No other strategy, under present circumstances, will fulfill the requirements of American security as adequately. The nation has tacitly acknowledged this fact by rejecting every opportunity to pursue an alternative Containment requires a capacity to wage both total and limited war. The capacity to wage one kind of war is insufficient without the capacity to wage the other.⁸

The basic objection to containment is that it is a negative, status quo, reactive policy that prolongs the international struggle and offers no real prospect for victory.⁹ Adherents of the policy have stated that the reactive aspect is true militarily but not for the accompanying political, economic, and sociopsychological strategies, which can be projected into the opposing camp under the shield of military containment. Examples of this approach are the recent US-Eastern Europe trade agreements, cultural exchange visits, and arms control negotiations.

Those who criticize containment have sometimes advocated a more dynamic policy of "liberation" or "roll-back." Notably, this concept was a plank in the Republican Party platform in 1952.

⁸Robert E. Osgood, Limited War: The Challenge to American Strategy, p. 235.

⁹Max Lerner, The Age of Overkill, p. 31.

It has been supported by some strategists; Strausz-Hupe' advocates "active pressures" and believes that the United States "must seize initiatives to open up the closed societies . . . and defeat the Communist movement outside the iron curtain as the first step in assuring the survival of free societies."¹⁰ He states that pure "liberation" policies, however, are not "operational."¹¹ The application of this policy has heretofore presented such unacceptable risks that it has never been executed. Even when events in the Communist world appeared favorable for liberation, as in East Germany in 1953 and Hungary in 1956, no practical military opportunity existed. Roll-back remains an elusive if attractive concept, and if applied militarily appears inconsistent with US policy of avoiding general or regional war.

To complete the spectrum of national strategy vis-a-vis world Communism, permissive isolation (creeping surrender) and self-initiated (preventive) war should be considered. Over the period under consideration, however, these strategies would have to be rejected as unacceptable to the American people, inconsistent with American character, and incompatible with national objectives.

A study of the grand strategies available leads to adoption of the best features of each to any given situation. Strategy would move beyond containment to participation--more political than military--designed to supplement deterrence and to deal with

¹⁰ Robert Strausz-Hupe', William R. Kintner, Stefan T. Possony, A Forward Strategy for America, p. 29.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 138.

its consequences.¹² This implies flexibility of means, but not purpose; and it implies exceptionally responsive and reliable national intelligence-formulating and decision-making mechanisms. It also implies recognition that the world strategic setting will change, possibly in unpredictable and fluctuating ways.¹³ Finally, it implies great diversity, accurate and sensitive control, and variegated strength in all factors of national power.

While containment must probably remain the dominant element of strategy, certain developments can inject dynamic opportunities into a regional environment. It may be possible to accelerate and exploit favorable regional developments, and eventually to promote an environment conducive to relaxation of tensions. A power structure may be erected from which regional "negotiation from strength" may be conducted or Communism subverted and neutralized.

These considerations lead to adoption of a theory of alternate means, wherein all aspects of power can be so precisely attuned to central direction that containment may be relaxed in areas where its ultimate cost is excessive, and roll-back may be executed where balance of power factors permit. In a sense, this is the US version of "coexistence." Military strategy in the Seventies must be based, then; like other national strategies, on the theory of alternate means within the framework of dynamic stability.

¹²Huntington, op. cit., p. 445.

¹³Klaus E. Knorr, Limited Strategic War, p. 13.

CHAPTER 3

CONFLICT IN THE SEVENTIES

TYPES OF WARFARE

Just as national objectives are the basis for national security policy, so is this policy the basis of military strategy,¹ which translates policy into tasks and missions for the armed forces.² In the Seventies, military strategy must implement the theory of alternate means throughout a broad spectrum of modern warfare. The functions of US military power will continue to be threefold: (1) Deterrence; (2) Defeat of the enemy by means sufficiently limited to serve political ends; and (3) Support of national foreign policy, by means short of war whenever possible.³

It is possible to scale warfare in many degrees of intensity. Most scholars and strategists have used the broad categories of general (total) war, limited (regional, local) war, and cold war (to include unconventional, guerrilla, and insurgency operations).⁴

¹Gordon B. Turner & Richard D. Challener, eds., National Security in the Nuclear Age, p. 19.

²William R. Kintner, Forging a New Sword, p. 16.

³Robert A. Goldwin, ed., America Armed, p. 1.

⁴For consistency, the JCS definitions of these warfare gradations will be used: general war--"armed conflict between the major powers of the communists and free worlds in which the total resources of the belligerents are employed, and the national survival of a major belligerent is in jeopardy"; limited war--"armed conflict short of general war, exclusive of incidents, involving the overt engagement of the military forces of two or more nations"; cold war--"a state of international tension, wherein political, economic, technological, sociological, psychological, paramilitary, and military measures short of overt armed conflict involving regular military forces

Considering the nuclear capabilities which the Communist camp will possess after 1970, the sine qua non of US military strategy must be the capability to launch and withstand homeland nuclear attack against and from the Soviet Union and China.⁵ No technological development which can upset this capability can be tolerated. It is axiomatic that strategic priority must be assigned to the means and techniques for waging thermonuclear general war.

At the opposite end of the warfare intensity scale, insurgency threatens to frustrate efforts of America to project freedom, progress, and prosperity to the peoples of the world. The application of alternate strategies will demand vigilant, astute assessments of the power struggle in countries where insurgency challenges the stability of legitimate governments. The decision to intervene--militarily or otherwise--must be made with complete understanding of significant vs. vital interests, and of local and regional nuances favoring withdrawal, containment, or roll-back. Factors of escalation must be evaluated, and escalation to limited war, as in Vietnam, must be considered. Since some escalation is inherent in warfare, choice of degrees of escalation is important in selection of strategy.⁶

are employed to achieve national objectives." US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Dictionary of United States Military Terms for Joint Usage, pp. 64, 83, 30.

⁵Bernard Brodie, Strategy in the Missile Age, p. 392.

⁶Robert B. Rigg, "Limitation, Escalation, & Sanctuaries in War," Army, Vol 14, Nov 1963, p. 62.

Regional war will be as unpredictable but not as prevalent⁷ as insurgency. It will be much more likely than general war.

Halperin has stated:

If neither major power wants a total war, but both are prepared to support the use of force by an indigenous group or to use their own force, then local wars can happen. The process of interaction between adversaries in a limited war is complex and confused.⁸

Regional war, virtually by definition, involves a vital interest of the participants and, consequently, represents a major commitment. The United States, therefore, should not initiate, join in, or support a regional conflict unless its own interests are vitally affected, but should be prepared for such conflict when these interests are truly at stake. Osgood states the rationale:

Preparation for limited war is as vital to American security as preparation for total war. It is a matter for thorough and systematic planning, not for improvisation. After all, in developing our capacity for total war we are preparing for the least likely contingency; its principal justification lies in the fact that it may never be used. But in developing a capacity for limited war we would be preparing to meet the most likely contingency; we would be maintaining the only credible military deterrent to Communist advances in the most vulnerable areas of the world.⁹

Regional war must have mutually acceptable and feasible limitations applied. Problems associated with nuclear weapons

⁷Samuel P. Huntington, The Common Defense, p. 352.

⁸Morton H. Halperin, Limited War in the Nuclear Age, p. 62.

⁹Robert E. Osgood, Limited War; the Challenge to American Strategy, p. 237.

will be formidable, and must be treated as prime considerations in constructing regional war strategy.¹⁰ US policy will have to demand flexibility of deterrence and selectivity of combat power to meet widely-varying threats. Rostow states:

The first dimension of East-West policy has been and must be the maintenance of a full spectrum of military strength designed to make the launching of aggression against the free world as unattractive as possible and to permit us to deal with aggression when it occurs in ways which not only protect the vital interests of the free world, but do so in ways which minimize the likelihood of nuclear war.¹¹

REGIONAL WAR: THE PROBABILITY FACTOR

The world consists of regional power centers, and there is a positive probability of the United States being involved in one or more regional wars in the Seventies. Such global realities as turmoil in developing nations, progressive altering of historical power balances, Communist domination of the great reaches of Eurasia, continuing population pressure, and unprecedented technological progress will all be factors tending toward regional disturbance.¹²

Essentially, US strategy dictates the conduct of limited war whenever armed force above the level of cold war is needed to

¹⁰Brodie, op. cit., p. 393.

¹¹W. W. Rostow, "U.S. Policy in a Changing World," Dept of State Bulletin, Vol. 51, 2 Nov 1964, p. 639.

¹²Harvey A. DeWeerd, "Historians Perspective: A Distinguished Military Historian Suggests that We Had Better Keep Our Limited War Powder Dry," Army, Vol. 13, Jan 1962, p. 44.

protect a vital interest. Typically, such a requirement could stem from intervention to halt invasion (as in Korea), to halt subversion (Lebanon), or to strengthen an indigenous force (Greece).¹³ Involvement would characteristically begin with US forces on the defensive, with overall strategy dictating a counteroffensive either to restore the status quo (containment) or to force the opponent to relinquish some asset (roll-back).

It has been a comforting illusion for some to note that the Soviets condemn regional (or limited) war as too dangerously escalatory to countenance, and that there is little published Soviet strategy directly applicable to such a war. Former Premier Khrushchev said in 1961:

There have been local wars in the past and they may occur again in the future, but the imperialists' possibilities of unleashing such wars are becoming increasingly limited. A small imperialist war, regardless of which of the imperialists starts it, might develop into a world thermonuclear, rocket war. Therefore we must wage a struggle both against world wars and against local wars.¹⁴

Nevertheless, with nuclear parity, the probability has increased that overt conflict will begin as regional nonnuclear war. If Communist leaders perceive an opportunity for net gains, they will have little hesitation to engage in limited war, either using their

¹³ Arthur I. Waskow, "American Military Doctrine," Survival, Vol. 4, May-Jun 1962, p. 109.

¹⁴ Nikita Khrushchev, "Report to Soviet Party Congress," The Current Digest of the Soviet Press, Feb 22, 1961, (Vol. XIII, No. 4) p. 8:2.

own large contiguous area forces or by proxy. Even if one accepts announced Soviet views, it is obvious that circumstances could force the potential enemy--or the United States--to resort to local war. The paucity of published Soviet limited war strategy is no proof that the Soviets would not resort to its application if circumstances dictated. Garthoff states, "Limited wars represent the classic form of Communist military action, for limited objectives, and at limited risks," while avoiding the antidoctinaire strategies of adventurism or opportunism.¹⁵

Finally, in the period 1970-1980 the United States will face a formidable enemy in Red China--an enemy that has made no pronouncements against war, that did not hesitate to engage in large-scale local war in Korea, and that will be capable of nuclear or nonnuclear war in several Asiatic rimland regions.

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Raymond L. Garthoff, The Soviet Image of Future War, p. 15.

CHAPTER 4

REGIONAL WAR AND STRATEGY

THE CHARACTER OF REGIONAL WAR

Since the mid-fifties there has been a general awareness of the likelihood and characteristics of regional limited war. Osgood wrote in 1957:

We cannot know whether total war is impossible or inevitable; we can only estimate probabilities There is only one rational choice: to act on the assumption that wars, though they are not entirely avoidable, may at least be limited; to bend every effort to develop a strategy designed to maintain American security by methods that maximize the prospects of limited war while minimizing the dangers of unlimited war.¹

Widely varying conclusions have been reached regarding the efficacy of limited war. Schelling states that "the main consequence of limited war is to raise the risk of general war."²

But Kissinger writes:

The inability to protect every area locally is no excuse for failing to secure those possible. The minimum goal of local defense must be prevention of cheap victories. The optimum situation is where aggression can be defeated locally. The latter is attainable in Europe. And the posture of other areas can be improved through their own forces and increases in American limited war capability.³

¹Robert E. Osgood, Limited War; the Challenge to American Strategy, p. 72.

²T. C. Schelling, "Nuclear Strategy in Europe," World Politics, Vol. 14, Apr 1962, p. 421.

³Henry A. Kissinger, The Necessity for Choice, p. 74.

The Korean War was limited regional war without a prepared strategic plan⁴ and without any widespread prior recognition that such a war could or would be waged in the nuclear age. Brodie writes that Korea "made it possible to think of limited war."⁵ Currently, insurgency-become-limited war in Southeast Asia is another example of an ad hoc strategy applied to a situation which was not clearly foreseen in its incipency.

It is important to recognize that unless regional war can be prevented, it must be limited.⁶ When its vital interests are involved, the United States must be strategically prepared to conduct such a limited war or face escalation to general war or alternatively some significant surrender. Neither of these alternatives is acceptable; accordingly, continuing search for military options and emphasis on the less destructive forms of violence are intended to provide controlled and useful force in environments of great uncertainty.⁷

In developing strategy, a deterrent posture opposing the outbreak or expansion of regional war must be given the same consideration as the waging of war itself. Kissinger has stated that deterrence cannot be separated from strategy.⁸ Indeed,

⁴Osgood, op. cit., p. 238.

⁵Bernard Brodie, The Meaning of Limited War, p. 11.

⁶Klaus E. Knorr, Limited Strategic War, p. 72.

⁷William W. Kaufmann, The McNamara Strategy, p. 135.

⁸Kissinger, op. cit., p. 58.

deterrence can become a strategy; Huntington writes that "the principal goal of a strategy of deterrence is to prevent other states from taking steps which would make conflict inevitable,"⁹ and that effective deterrence requires identification of contingencies to be prevented, conveying one's intention to respond if these contingencies should occur, and convincing the enemy that any potential gain would not be worth its cost.¹⁰ Beaufre writes that a decision is achieved "when a certain psychological effect has been produced on the enemy [and he] is convinced that it is useless to start or alternately to continue the struggle."¹¹

Morton lists three essential elements of limited war: freedom to negotiate, self-imposed restraint on the use of weapons, and limitation of political objectives.¹² Regional war is by definition limited geographically. The Soviets use "local" instead of "limited," and their concepts of limitation are essentially geographic.¹³ Regional war may also be limited in the types of weapons or delivery systems used and targets struck. Perhaps the surest limitation would be swift and decisive victory based on regionally ready military forces and political acuteness. Certainly some limitation of objectives is implied, since no unlimited objective for a world power could be confined to a single region;

⁹Samuel P. Huntington, The Common Defense, p. 20.

¹⁰Huntington, op. cit., p. 431.

¹¹Andre Beaufre, An Introduction to Strategy, p. 23.

¹²Louis Morton, "The Twin Essentials of Limited War," Army, Vol. 11, Jan 1961, p. 48.

¹³Robert N. Ginsburgh, US Military Strategy in the Sixties, p. 120.

and termination of regional war may require both belligerents to sacrifice some of their objectives.¹⁴ Halperin writes:

Flexibility and moderate battlefield objectives are likely to be most conducive to the stabilization, contraction, and termination of a local war.¹⁵

This is quite feasible as long as the conflicting powers are left with vital interests unimpaired.

Of major concern in regional war is escalation; if crucial interests are involved, successive and progressive commitments may force the intensity toward general war. This may occur by broadening the range of weapons, enlarging objectives, or extending the geographical area of conflict.¹⁶ US strategy must aim toward confining regional war to the minimum intensity possible. Objectives must be achieved by regional strategy asymmetrically advantageous to the United States without exceeding the opponent's escalation threshold.

It may be concluded that a key to regional war success is the achieving of maximum concessions from the opponent without undue escalation and without forcing the opponent to the desperation created by the need to relinquish a vital interest. At worst, this will represent return to the status quo ante; at best it may be possible to achieve certain roll-back goals before terminating hostilities.

¹⁴Kissinger, op. cit., p. 65.

¹⁵Morton H. Halperin, Limited War in the Nuclear Age, p. 9.

¹⁶Robert B. Rigg, "Limitation, Escalation, and Sanctuaries in War," Army, Vol. 14, Nov 1963, p. 66.

PLANNING FOR REGIONAL WAR

Since a strategy for regional war must provide for deterrence as well as for the conduct of hostilities, planning should consider the interdependence of nuclear and nonnuclear deterrents. Snyder writes:

In contrast to strategic nuclear forces, the independent deterrent utility of nonnuclear forces tends to vary more or less directly with their defense utility; their deterrent effect is mostly a function of their capacity to deny territorial gains to the enemy rather than of their punishment capacity.¹⁷

There can be no real regional deterrence without global deterrence--another example of the direct relation between general and limited war capabilities. The Cuban missile crisis exemplified melding regional and global deterrence for application against a specific threat.¹⁸ It will always be important for the enemy to know that he is everywhere opposing US military power in its entirety--even though only a small fraction may be "in the field."¹⁹ Similarly, while regional stability is primarily a function of the prevailing local balance of power, there can be no truly effective regional balance without concomitant global balance.²⁰ These considerations illustrate that while regional wars are inherently

¹⁷ Glenn H. Snyder, Deterrence and Defence, p. 280.

¹⁸ Neville Brown, Strategic Mobility, p. 104.

¹⁹ Harold L. Hitchens, "Objectives in Future Strategic War," Air University Press, Vol. XVII, No. 1, Nov-Dec 1965, p. 45.

²⁰ "Strategic Asymmetries," by Kintner and Possony in the Spring 1965 issue of Orbis, addresses the US-Soviet power balance.

limited, they must be considered in global context as affecting the world powers and world balance of power directly or indirectly.

In planning regional deterrence, there are three structural options available, and the optimum deterrent strategy is that which adopts the best mix of these options. In essence, there are on-site power, regionally available power, and homeland-based power. These available options are summarized by Mr. McNamara:

In limited war the ability to concentrate our military power in a threatened area in a matter of days rather than weeks can make enormous differences in the total force required, and . . . could halt aggression before it really started. In reducing reaction time in limited war situations . . . one method is to deploy in advance of actual need suitable US forces to potential trouble areas There are obvious limits to this approach. A second is to maintain in the US a highly ready force for quick deployment overseas. A third method . . .²¹ is prepositioning, and flying troops in as needed.

The actual mix for any particular region must be optimized by weighing various local power factors; defense economics, the prevailing regional political climate, and global commitments will be important factors in decision making, as will the particular military criteria of the region itself. In this regard, the indirect approach of Liddell-Hart²² and Beaufre may be effective; the latter, for example, describes an "exterior maneuver" wherein the focal point for deterrent pressures may actually be outside

²¹Statement of Secretary of Defense McNamara before the House Armed Services Committee on the FY 1966-67 Defense Program and 1966 Defense Budget, 18 Feb 1965, p. 72-3.

²²B. H. Liddell-Hart, Strategy: The Indirect Approach, pp. 339-347.

the fighting area while producing results within the conflict region.²³

FORWARD DEPLOYMENT

If aggression is part of a "piecemeal" operation, forces immediately available in the area must block a fait accompli.

The existence of such forces will usually be an adequate deterrent.²⁴

If aggression is more ambitious, deployed forces would delay the aggressor until reserve forces could be applied. The importance of these forward deployment forces is ascribed to by most US strategists.²⁵ There are alternative options:

If large forces are deployed in forward areas, they can respond quickly to a developing situation and the requirement for 'long haul' transportation is reduced . . . It requires very large numbers of men, great quantities of equipment, and long periods of overseas service; it involves all the uncertainties and difficulties associated with foreign bases--base rights and Status of Forces Agreements; it increases defense expenditures abroad; and reduces the flexibility of military posture. A 'fire brigade' based in continental United States is more economical and flexible but requires enormous transport. Also, quick on-site reaction may be necessary.²⁶

There is no question regarding the efficacy of selective continued US forward deployment in the Seventies. Such deployment, properly executed, can reduce the time required to influence an

²³Beaufre, op. cit., p. 110.

²⁴Ibid., p. 125.

²⁵Maxwell D. Taylor, The Uncertain Trumpet, p. 153.

²⁶Statement of Secretary of Defense, op. cit., p. 115.

action and serves as insurance against an unacceptable fait accompli²⁷ as well as a signal indicator of American firmness of purpose.²⁸ Strategy for penalizing an accomplished act is no substitute for the capability to resist territorial aggression in the first instance.²⁹ "Showing the flag" in this sense is as sound a strategy when confronting Communism as it once was in staking out the British Empire,³⁰ and should reduce the possibility of enemy miscalculation as well as set the pattern of resistance for local forces.

While forward strategy is credited with providing "quick reaction," it is also a means for rapid exploitation at appropriate times and places.

In planning forward deployment in the period 1970-1980, the specific locations of military bases will require careful scrutiny lest the political liabilities of using foreign facilities outweigh inherent deployment advantages. Wherever possible, military forces should be located on territory controlled by the United States or by some firm ally. Increased strategic lift capabilities in the future will significantly lessen requirements for overseas bases and even for deployed manpower, assuming that reserves can be

²⁷Halperin, op. cit., p. 123.

²⁸William W. Kaufman, (ed), Military Policy and National Security, p. 114.

²⁹Knorr, op. cit., p. 88.

³⁰Brown, op. cit., p. 10.

responsive in 30-45 days.³¹ The solution will encompass both regional and strategic reserve forces in some suitable mix, with technology and defense economics playing roles equally important with that of military planning.

NUCLEAR REGIONAL WAR

Whether nuclear weapons should be injected into regional war is a function of prevailing circumstances. Normally it will not be in US interest to do so, but their use cannot be precluded.³² Secretary McNamara has stated that "present forces could rely on nonnuclear means to counter a wide range of Sino-Soviet aggressions except in Europe."³³ There is a possibility of initiating the use of nuclear weapons to protect a vital interest or to pre-empt a similar enemy attack; the capability for second use must always be maintained. There is some evidence of Soviet interest in holding warfare to nonnuclear conditions.³⁴

The overriding objection to the use of nuclear weapons is the escalatory danger inherent in such use. Although some strategists, like Brodie, have written that nuclear weapons must be used in limited wars,^{35, 36} most have concluded otherwise. Schelling

³¹ Secretary of Defense McNamara, op. cit., p. 73.

³² Ibid., p. 74.

³³ Kaufmann, op. cit., p. 100.

³⁴ Raymond L. Garthoff, Soviet Strategy in the Nuclear Age, p. 98.

³⁵ Bernard Brodie, Strategy in the Missile Age, p. 329.

³⁶ Bernard Brodie, What Price Conventional Capabilities in Europe, p. 8.

declares that the "principal inhibition on the use of nuclear weapons in limited war may disappear with their first use."³⁷

Read has written that "The only limit on weapons that appears viable . . . is the nuclear-conventional distinction."³⁸

Halperin advocates the denial deterrent of conventional ground power, as opposed to a nuclear punishment deterrent, and stresses its greater credibility (provided it is sufficient). He states that the "most crucial requirement for local war is ability to provide just the level of force necessary to deal with the situation."³⁹ Kaufman argues strongly for the nonnuclear approach:

Despite what may be a comparative disadvantage in manpower, the United States should still be able, with the help of indigenous forces, with mobility, well-organized logistic forces, great conventional firepower, and highly trained central reserves, not merely to match but actually to beat the enemy at this type of game.⁴⁰

ALLIANCE SYSTEMS

The United States will remain committed to collective security, with mutual defense agreements with over 40 nations.⁴¹ No feasible US strategy for the deterrence or conduct of regional war can be developed without regional alliance structures. The reasons for this are political, in avoiding the derogation of

³⁷T. C. Schelling, Nuclear Weapons and Limited War, p. 10.

³⁸Klaus E. Knorr, Limited Strategic War, p. 92.

³⁹Halperin, op. cit., p. 122.

⁴⁰Kaufman, op. cit., p. 122.

⁴¹Secretary of Defense McNamara, op. cit., p. 70.

imperialism or neocolonialism; economic, since regional forces are significantly cheaper to maintain; psychological, in bolstering independence and commitment of allies; and military, since US forces will be broadly committed in the Seventies and must be conserved wherever possible. Secretary McNamara has stated that "proper support for and by indigenous forces on the scene would give a greater return to collective defense than additional US forces,"⁴² and that

we should not and cannot take upon ourselves the entire burden of defending the free world with our own manpower--we could not long sustain such a burden. /There is/ less cost when allies do it, and /our/⁴³ intervention carries danger of expansion of war.

There are corollaries to alliance systems. Continued military and economic aid to allies is usually required to insure strength and meaningful partnership in crisis. Training indigenous armed forces is necessary. Continuing politico-military efforts to identify and correlate mutual goals and strategy are needed, since it is essential that US and Allied forces have clarity of understanding and mutual acceptance of common regional strategy.

As long as the United States has vital interests in a particular region, there must be allies in that region. It will be crucial to maintain stability of these allies in the event of external pressures or internal insurgency. Inherently, the

⁴²Kaufman, op. cit., p. 100.

⁴³Secretary of Defense McNamara, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

government of the country concerned is the one best agent to withstand local pressures, just as indigenous forces are best able to cope with regional conflict if they possess the requisite power. The conclusion is that a key to success in regional strategy lies in buttressing receptive nations within the region itself with efforts applied to all power factors and not just to military elements.

Another pertinent consideration contributing to the growth of the importance of regional alliances is the probability that in the Seventies the United States will be the only world power capable of effective global opposition to international Communism. Even the strongest of other Western states will henceforth be of significant strategic assistance only in their own European region.

Finally, the strategic importance of logistics is such that no state can successfully engage in distant war without an adequate base infrastructure. Problems of base and facilities access have many political and economic overtones.⁴⁴ In confronting Communism along the vastness of its Eurasian rimland, the United States will be faced with severe geopolitical challenges in establishing and maintaining a comprehensive, integrated base and support structure despite assumed air and sea control of long lines of communications. Reliance on effective mutual security systems and cooperative logistics arrangements will be essential to solve the problem.

⁴⁴William R. Kintner, "The Politicalization of Strategy," Marine Corps Gazette, Vol. 49, Apr 1965, p. 23.

CHAPTER 5

REGIONAL SPECIFICS

The heart of the problem of developing regional war strategy is devising methods to conduct military operations that are compatible with limitations and yet militarily effective in supporting US national security policy.¹ A basic difficulty is that the great overall US strength does not guarantee strength relevant to particular sites.²

To determine the specifics of regional military strategy for the 1970-1980 period, it is necessary to consider certain world regions in the context of their own environments. It may be possible, while discerning singular factors pertinent to specific areas, to determine patterns of consistency applicable to the deterrence and conduct of regional war generally. It will be necessary to distinguish between vital areas as opposed to peripheral areas. Regional war in the former may be characterized by violent, brief action to produce a fait accompli followed by negotiations; in the latter, conflict will more likely be prolonged attrited war, conventional or guerrilla in nature.³ It will be necessary to

. . . develop strategic doctrine compatible both with our national interests and with the political obligations imposed by our collective security efforts, of

¹ Robert E. Osgood, Limited War; the Challenge to American Strategy, p. 243.

² Henry A. Kissinger, The Necessity for Choice, p. 95.

³ Andre Beaufre, Introduction to Strategy, p. 9.

altering that doctrine in accordance with changes in the political situation and in military technology, and of integrating service capabilities into one cohesive pattern which supports this strategic doctrine.⁴

THE EUROPEAN REGION

In no world region, save its own homeland, will the United States continue to have so much at stake as in Europe. The political, economic, and cultural assets of Western Europe are among the major strengths of the free world; it is unthinkable that they be permitted to fall under the aegis of Communism. The criticality of Europe dictates a policy of strict containment--a relatively inflexible confrontation along the iron curtain and in Berlin. The security of Europe is the one issue external to the United States which would justify general war.⁵

Military strategy in Europe will continue to be based on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Forms of command structure and integration may be altered, but the bedrock concept of mutual defense will remain:

NATO is an important political and economic as well as military asset to the United States, and we should do everything in our power to maintain and enlarge its strength and unity.⁶

⁴William R. Kintner, Forging a New Sword, p. 18.

⁵Raymond Aron, On War, p. 99.

⁶Secretary of Defense statement before the House Armed Services Committee on the FY 66-67 Defense Program and 1966 Defense Budget, 18 Feb 1965, p. 29.

In Europe, the United States will continue to rely on forward deployment, regional forces, and rapid strategic reinforcement from continental America.⁷ The concept of prepositioning equipment for strategically deploying forces prior to outbreak of hostilities has proved feasible,⁸ despite expensive storage and maintenance problems, and will continue as a part of strategic preparation. Flexibility in strategic approach and response will be important, recognizing that the Soviets continue to stress varied and balanced capabilities in strategic decisions.⁹

The primary threat in Europe will continue to be a Communist incursion into Berlin, West Germany, or neutral Austria. The NATO flanks--Norway and Greece and Turkish Thrace--are vulnerable,¹⁰ but it is doubtful that Soviet strategists will consider them worth the risk of regional war with the very real question whether such war could be confined to Europe.

In the anticipated future, political and economic considerations will preclude parity with Communist nonnuclear strength in Europe. Particularly, defenses in northern Germany, where the

⁷Robert E. Osgood, NATO The Entangling Alliance, pp. 72-3.

⁸The United States has prepositioned equipment west of the Rhine in Germany for two divisions and ten smaller units. The concept of airlifting personnel to Europe and having them use this equipment on short notice was successfully tested in Operation Big Lift in October 1963.

⁹Raymond L. Garthoff, Soviet Strategy in the Nuclear Age, p. 266.

¹⁰Neville Brown, Strategic Mobility, p. 223.

weakest NATO forces are arrayed across the best invasion terrain, constitute a problem which is not susceptible to early correction. The question of the role of "conventional" (nonnuclear) vs. nuclear forces will have to be settled. Many feel that NATO must have a strategy of local defense and must build up its conventional forces.¹¹

Retaining the regional aspect of any war in Europe will be exceedingly difficult because of the nature of the battlefield, the magnitude of interests at stake, and the character of the belligerents.^{12, 13} Just as the NATO allies must consider any Eastern European incursion as an attack against all of NATO, so will Warsaw Pact states expect active Soviet participation in any conflict. There are some, like France's Gallois, who decry any possibility of limiting war in Europe, believing that the "escalation principle" will prevent it. This group relies on nuclear deterrence and condemns the buildup of conventional forces as "humanizing" war and thereby increasing the possibility of its occurrence.¹⁴

The most volatile escalatory factor in regional European war would be the use of nuclear weapons, whether such use be "tactical" or "limited strategic." Escalation is not in

¹¹Kissinger, op. cit., p. 110.

¹²Aron, op. cit., p. 99.

¹³Osgood, Limited War, pp. 260-1.

¹⁴Pierre M. Gallois, The Balance of Terror, p. 230.

US interest; it is therefore mandatory, strategically, to maintain the maximum possible capability to wage war in Europe without using any nuclear weapon. Osgood warns of reliance on nuclear weapons:

Although NATO's nuclear strategy might help allied governments escape the domestic political difficulties of imposing burdensome defense programs upon the people, it promised to aggravate the larger difficulties that sprang from their growing dependence upon an admittedly suicidal response, the credibility of which they were themselves inclined to call into question in order to appease domestic apprehensions, even while they denied the feasibility of an alternative response.¹⁵

There is real doubt, however, whether limited war in Europe could remain nonnuclear. Secretary McNamara's 1963 testimony so indicates:

Presently programmed /FY 1964/ forces, in general, could, by nonnuclear means alone, counter a wide spectrum of Sino-Soviet bloc aggressions in regions other than Europe. With respect to Europe, the . . . U.S. forces together . . . with NATO, would not be able to contain an all-out Soviet conventional attack without invoking the use of nuclear weapons.¹⁶

Many strategists have reached the same conclusion as Mr. McNamara. Heilbrunn has stated that the NATO 30-division force is insufficient and that the present force could only meet Communist "probes" and could deter only conventional attacks by forces of equal or less numerical strength.¹⁷

¹⁵Osgood, NATO The Entangling Alliance, p. 146.

¹⁶Bernard L. Austin, "Military Considerations in National Strategy," Naval War College Review, Vol. 16, Dec 1963, p. 2 (quoting from testimony to the House Armed Services Committee, January 1963).

¹⁷Otto Heilbrunn, "NATO and the Flexible Response," Military Review, Vol. 45, May 1965, p. 25.

Despite the apparent grave difficulties of holding in Europe without tapping the nuclear arsenal, use of "tactical" nuclear weapons would create such exceptional danger that the effects could be catastrophically strategic rather than tactical.¹⁸ Schelling states that the "purpose of nuclear weapons in a tactical war . . . is not just . . . to redress the balance of the battlefield. It is to make the war too painful to continue."¹⁹ Heilbrunn writes that in limited war the Western defense may limit its strategic aims but not its operational aim--destruction of the enemy forces on the battlefield. War which begins as conventional war may not remain so, for the danger of escalation is ever present. The West is able to deter nuclear attack, but it must also be able to discourage conventional aggression by nonnuclear deterrent power. If this fails, it must meet conventional attack with conventional power.²⁰

To avoid the use of nuclear weapons, NATO conventional strengths must be increased above present levels; national forces must be provided modern and complete equipment and support; malstationing must be corrected; support base infrastructure must be strengthened; rapid reinforcement capability must be achieved; and plans and

¹⁸T. C. Schelling, "Nuclear Strategy in Europe," World Politics, Vol. 14, Apr 1962, p. 424.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 431.

²⁰Otto Heilbrunn, Conventional Warfare in the Nuclear Age, pp. 21-59.

provisions for a long war must be readied.²¹ Moreover, if the deterrent value of such posture is to be fully realized, it must be made evident, along with political commitment for its use. Nonnuclear force must be so incontestably powerful that no conventional aggression could succeed--either local faits accomplis or more massive and less determinate thrusts. US forces are adequate only if they can never, because of weakness, be required to be the first to resort to nuclear weapons.²² Halperin has summarized scaled deterrence:

The policy of threatening massive retaliation while maintaining adequate local defense forces probably produces the most effective deterrent against deliberate large-scale aggression. It enhances belief in the threat of massive retaliation to the greatest possible degree while still suggesting to the enemy that even if the US is bluffing it has an alternate capability with which to intervene Local war can best be deterred by creating an uncertainty in /Communist/ minds as to whether strategic forces will be used in retaliation, but a certainty that the U.S. would inter-²³vene. The U.S. must therefore have a dual capability.

Conceivably even the publicized reality of a powerful conventional force may not deter aggression. Realistically, the Soviets now have the capability of rapidly concentrating a preponderance of in-being conventional forces, in a particular defined area, despite the potential overall manpower superiority of the NATO powers.

²¹Gordon B. Turner and Richard D. Challener, (eds.), National Security in the Nuclear Age, pp. 265-6.

²²US Air Force Academy, Dept of Political Science, American Defense Policy, p. 313.

²³Morton H. Halperin, Limited War in the Nuclear Age, p. 125.

Should NATO be threatened with strategic defeat as a result--or possibly to reply in kind or to pre-empt Soviet use²⁴ the conflict would have to be escalated by employing nuclear weapons tactically (i.e., against enemy forces in contact and close reserve, combat area routes of communication (close-in interdiction), and nuclear elements of the invading forces). It would then be hoped that some sort of negotiated settlement would occur, or that the enemy could be contained and ultimately ejected without further escalation. Every effort must be made to confine the conflict to Europe, even if, within that region, war should become total. Some, like Aron, remain convinced that limiting any nuclear war in Europe is unlikely;²⁵ others, like Brodie, claim that limitation is feasible even if nuclear weapons are introduced.²⁶

It takes two parties to limit war but only one to escalate. It will be necessary to possess a spectrum of escalatory potential to deter escalation or to compete successfully at greater levels of intensity. Since no rational opponent will escalate without reasonable prospects of securing some advantage, the key strategy for deterrence or warfare in Europe is maintenance of sufficient variegated strength to present so formidable a front that aggression cannot appear attractive.²⁷ This strategy--flexible response--

²⁴Heilbrunn, op. cit., p. 134.

²⁵Aron, op. cit., p. 159.

²⁶Bernard Brodie, Strategy in the Missile Age, p. 336.

²⁷Henry Owen, "NATO Strategy: What is Past is Prologue," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 43, Jul 65, p. 689.

must include provision for strong dual-purpose forces located where their commitment is obvious; those which cannot be deployed far forward must be readily available and overtly committed to future action.²⁸ This cannot be done by the United States alone; Western Europe must contribute its reasonable share to the common cause.²⁹

Regarding nuclear weapons, their use must be avoided, if conceivably possible, because of the danger of destroying escalation constraints. A recent Research Analysis Corporation report concludes:

From an evaluation of the Soviet views as expressed in the professional military and party literature, it is difficult to accept the thesis that a limited nuclear war in Europe is possible. How the Soviets would act in given circumstances cannot, of course, be known in advance, but their general policy and ideological views, as well as their specific discussions of nuclear war in the European context, provide little support for a concept of graduated escalation. Moreover, Soviet behavior in the past provides little basis for assuming that Soviet constraint would operate in a nuclear context in Europe.³⁰

But to those who contend that nuclear war in Europe cannot be limited, the answer is that an attempt at such limitation is more worthy of effort than immediate escalation to intercontinental warfare.

²⁸Maxwell D. Taylor, The Uncertain Trumpet, p. 153.

²⁹Osgood, NATO The Entangling Alliance, p. 14.

³⁰John R. Thomas, Limited Nuclear War in Soviet Strategic Thinking, McLean, Virginia: Research Analysis Corp., Nov 1965, p. 9.

THE MIDDLE EAST REGION

Like Europe, the Middle East presents unique aspects of the struggle against Communism. But, in Europe, the United States faces the full power of the enemy with heavy US forces already committed; with forces, tactics, and strategy based on defined defense; with resort to nuclear weapons imminent; and with capable NATO allies. In the Middle East, however, as in all areas outside Europe, there are few fixed defenses, with deployment from afar required to meet a conflict situation, and speed of response becomes more important than mass. There is also a wide variety of geography and climate; the importance and likelihood of the use of nuclear weapons recede; the United States must train and equip its allies; and there are many widely varied political problems and implications.³¹ While the Middle East is vulnerable to regional war, the physical possibility of limiting war there in area, weapons, and targets is far more promising than in Europe.³² US interests will remain vital in western Turkey, Iran, in the oil-producing areas, and in the Suez. The United States faced potential limited war in Egypt in 1956, in Lebanon in 1958, and in Iran in 1946.

Committed forces which characterize US strength in Europe will not exist in the Middle East, just as NATO alliance strength cannot be duplicated there.

³¹Seymour J. Deitchman, Limited War and American Defense Policy, pp. 4-9.

³²Osgood, Limited War, p. 266.

There will continue to be instability factors in the Middle East which could cause US involvement in regional war. Most serious would be a Soviet incursion into Iran and Turkey; other possibilities are conflict between the Arab states and Israel, Communist-inspired insurgency in countries in whose democratic viability the United States has an interest, or actions between third party states which could close off the Suez Canal or the oil supplies on which Western Europe depends.³³

In the Middle East, forward strategy is desirable but forward deployment is difficult. It will not appear politically or psychologically feasible to establish American land bases even in such friendly countries as Iran or Turkey. Prepositioned stocks may be acceptable and earmarked for emergency mobile strategic forces, as may predesignated airfields and naval facilities. The shared use of any British base in the area should be considered. As in almost all "peripheral" areas, projection of power by sea and air will be necessary. Initial ground forces should be drawn from suitable Fleet Marine Forces,³⁴ with subsequent strength buildup utilizing Army elements from the United States Strike Command. The same will apply to air strength, with initial Navy-Marine commitment followed by Composite Air Strike Force (CASF) packages from the United States. In the Mediterranean, continued presence of the

³³Brown, op. cit., p. 6.

³⁴Carl H. Amme, "The Changing Nature of Power," Naval Institute of Proceedings, Mar 1963, Vol. 89, No. 3, p. 33.

Sixth Fleet will be essential, and in the Indian Ocean establishment of an additional fleet appears desirable.

Strategy in the Middle East must reflect two variant approaches. With sufficient warning for buildup, or in countering insurgency or actions not directly involving the Soviet Union, forward strategy is desirable with border deployment where possible. The strategic goal would be selective containment plus roll-back where it could be accomplished quickly without direct Soviet confrontation. In other situations, notably unheralded Soviet aggression into Turkey or Iran, strategy will dictate maximum use of indigenous forces with early US deployment. The value of trained, equipped alliance forces would be eminently clear. Dropping back from the forward (border) strategy would be a concession to realities of time and space; subsequent campaigns to restore the status quo ante would be more costly in time, casualties, and funds than similar restoration from more forward positions. Strategy must strike a balance between the initially costly advantages of forward strategy and the more easily attained but ultimately more expensive posture in which strategically mobile reserves replace on-site commitments. It is essential in the latter case to guarantee the capability of indigenous forces, together with regional reserves, to hold vital positions until strategic reserves from outside the region can be brought to bear.

Concomitant with relying on distant reserves is the strategic requirement for transportation to move required men and material.

This must be done employing both air and sealift; if prepositioning is to be used, forces to receive prepositioned equipment should be flown to the region of operations. Additional forces necessary to hold required initial positions would also require airlift. In situations with sufficient advance warning, or in insurgency situations, sealift will suffice for most deploying elements.

In the Middle East, where there is access by sea to threatened areas, prepositioned floating stocks will be feasible and desirable. The recently developed Fast Deployment Logistics Ship (FDLS) has suitable floating depot characteristics, and could be based at ports in the Mediterranean, in the Persian Gulf, or in the Indian Ocean.

Strategy for the Middle East should not contemplate diversion of strength from some other region, as was done in moving Army units from Europe to Lebanon in 1958. The risks entailed in so doing, despite limitations on Soviet resources for concurrent commitment, are not warranted by the illusory economy of force achieved, and are inconsistent with the essential premises that regional wars may and regional deterrence must proceed concurrently.

In considering confining regional war in the Middle East to that region, the use of nuclear weapons will be an issue for decision. The capability for such use must be provided in the event that opposing forces initiate employment; but first use can only be justified militarily or politically as a last resort to protect a vital interest. In the Middle East, only preservation of western Turkey, including the Black Sea straits, Iran, Suez, or access to

regional oil supplies are truly vital in this sense. But first use of nuclear weapons should not be required if adequate strategic nonnuclear power, indigenous as well as US, is planned, programmed, and committed as a publicized deterrent and, if necessary, real war force.³⁵ Here, as elsewhere, the credibility of US strategic commitment must be manifest in unambiguous and tangible terms.

In the Middle East, US policy must be predicated on retention of the non-Communist character of the area. Supporting military strategy must provide for: insuring the strongest possible indigenous forces in the key countries of Turkey and Iran; guarding against Communist insurgency in all nations of the region with force deployment where necessary; and rapid commitment of US forces in strength to halt overt aggression and restore the status quo. Force commitment will have to be based on regional fleet and marine forces, token regional US ground forces, prepositioned equipment ashore and afloat, and the movement of mobile strategic reserves from the United States.

THE SOUTH ASIA REGION

In the South Asia region, the arc of Asian rimland stretching from Iran to Burma and centering on the Indian subcontinent, military and political conditions are conducive to piecemeal

³⁵ Exercise Delawar, a combined US-Iranian training exercise in 1964, was an excellent example of regional contingency planning and demonstrated US strategic support of Middle East interests.

Communist aggressions which could result in regional war. According to Osgood,

In these areas neither the immediate importance of the political objectives at stake nor the physical difficulty of imposing geographical, weapons, and targets restrictions constitutes such a serious obstacle to the limitation of war as in the NATO area.³⁶

South Asia will increasingly be identified with vital US interests. Challenges of protecting these interests from Communist pressure will intensify, especially along India's northeast border, and may well peak in the 1970's. Significant in this region is the fact that both major Communist powers can mount regional threats, although, in the period under study, Red China will represent the greatest challenge.

US military strategy in South Asia is similar in many respects to that in the Middle East. Central to this strategy is the continuing viability of Pakistan and India as non-Communist powers and dependence on forces of these countries to block Communist penetration southward. It is because of this dependence that the recent Kashmir conflict was so disturbing to US interests. Since a Communist India would drastically alter the regional and world balances of power, its retention in the free world must be considered a vital interest for which the United States must be prepared to take any necessary political or military action. Military strategy should be based on Western-oriented, democratically motivated

³⁶Osgood, Limited War, p. 267.

Indian armed forces trained, supported, and supplied as necessary by the United States. The basis for the strategy must be the employment of this force to block insurgency or external aggression.³⁷ Air and materiel support from US resources must be made available from regional or Western Hemisphere reserves. Against major ground force aggression, US air and ground forces in moderate strength should be employed, not only for combat power but as a recognizable US commitment to the cause of free India. Nuclear weapons should be used only to respond in kind, or, with Indian approval, to prevent loss of the country.

US regional military strategy, consistent with the theory of vital interests, should not envision greater commitment in Pakistan or Burma than air power, materiel, and all forms of military training and assistance.³⁸ Afghanistan should be ideologically and economically cultivated, but a Communist takeover there cannot be feasibly opposed militarily, and no American resources should be diverted for that purpose. Ceylon, on the contrary, is so strategically located that it cannot be permitted to become a Communist military power base. US air and sea power would have to be actively employed to prevent such an eventuality.

In summary, the strategic importance of South Asia will continue to grow through the next two decades. At the same time, Chinese

³⁷ Robert Strausz-Hupe, William R. Kintner, Stefan Possony, A Forward Strategy for America, p. 155.

³⁸ William W. Kaufman, (ed), Military Policy and National Security, p. 115.

hegemonial desires in Asia will increase the threat. US military strategy must concentrate on developing indigenous strengths in the region to offset subversion or infiltration by Communism. In India, overt aggression must be opposed by strategic reserves from the United States in support of Indian armed forces. Preservation of non-Communist India is a vital interest and must be effected even at the cost of regional nuclear war.

THE SOUTHEAST ASIA REGION

Southeast Asia will probably continue in 1970-1980 to be the world's most volatile area and one of great strategic significance. US regional commitment there will remain heavy. Military strategy in the region must be based on a national policy determination of vital interests. Communist moves which threaten vitally strategic areas must be recognized as requiring opposition even to the point of incurring regional war. Military strategy dictates holding Thailand, Cambodia, Malaya, and South Vietnam. Each of these countries will present varying demands on US power and will require a combined strategy of token US forward deployment, extensive prepositioning afloat and on land, and availability of mobile strategic reserves. Strategy must consider requirements for functioning or standby support infrastructure; efforts to achieve this are underway in Vietnam and Thailand. The present British base at Singapore, and all British power east of Suez, may not

be available after 1970, and Australia as well as Indian Ocean bases will have to be substituted.³⁹

In Southeast Asia, the military strategies being employed in Thailand and South Vietnam represent two stages of opposing the Communist threat. In Thailand strategy includes: extensive aid and assistance in building strong indigenous forces; physical presence of selected US forces as dictated by local dynamics; availability of prepositioned equipment to facilitate the effectiveness of rapid reserve deployment; and preplanned deployment of forces from the western Pacific or America in event of a regional war in which China is the opponent. In South Vietnam counterinsurgency operations have escalated into regional war without overt invasion, demonstrating the ease with which such conflict can develop and its potential magnitude. In the Seventies, South Vietnam may still represent the most virulent confrontation between the US policy of containing Communist expansion and the dual Chinese goal of hegemony in Southeast Asia accompanied by ejection of US forces and influence from the region.

It will not be in the US interest to escalate warfare in Asia. Nonnuclear strategy must be given precedence, with nuclear employment only to respond in kind. However, consistent with the theory of vital interests, US military strategy for regional war in Southeast Asia must include use of nuclear weapons if necessary

³⁹Brown, op. cit., p. 47.

to retain an acceptable position in the areas listed above as being critical. The dual requirement has been stated by Ginsburgh:

Continuing strategic superiority which provides the United States with escalation dominance offers the best hope that if military action does occur, the United States will be able to employ its forces to win with the minimum risk of large-scale nuclear war.⁴⁰

Military strategy in Southeast Asia must recognize that the only truly massive threat is Chinese invasion and that the only sufficiently powerful counterforce will be US forces deployed in great strength. While calling for major mobilization effort, such a course of action would be feasible and necessary. The strategy of avoiding ground war in Asia is not universally valid; while appropriately applied to continental China itself, it should not deter the deployment necessary to retain such a strategically significant region as Southeast Asia.

Because of the great distance from the United States to Southeast Asia, increased use of prepositioning concepts will have to be made. Equipment for sizable forces should be stored in floating and land depots to eliminate as much of the shipment problem and time delay as possible. Three victory-class cargo ships are now located in the western Pacific as "forward floating depots."⁴¹ It is planned to replace these vessels with "Forward Deployment Logistics Ships" as the latter join the military

⁴⁰ Robert N. Ginsburgh, U.S. Military Strategy in the Sixties, p. 134.

⁴¹ McNamara's testimony, op. cit., p. 120.

inventory. The floating depot, combined with new dimensions for airlift expected in the 1970's with the C5A aircraft, promises materially increased capabilities for supporting limited war in Southeast Asia and other regions.

Limited war in Southeast Asia illustrates an important element of US regional war strategy for the Seventies: that of requiring large reserve forces organized, trained, and equipped to insure extremely rapid activation and movement overseas. Strike Command active duty strategic reserve forces will not be adequate for such regional war while continuing to maintain adequate strength to meet other crises. This reserve structuring will be an absolute requirement for the Seventies and will represent a major departure from present acceptable standards of operational readiness.

THE FAR EAST REGION

To complete a survey of regional war requirements in areas ringing the Communist world, the Far East must be considered. Here, as elsewhere, emphasis is on rapid action by small, in-being, well-trained forces supported by regional or strategic reserves possessing maximum strategic mobility.⁴²

Containment of Communism in this region will be concentrated in Japan, Okinawa, Formosa, the Philippines, and South Korea. The non-Communist stability of each is vitally important and would warrant commitment to regional war if necessary.

⁴²Turner & Challener, op. cit., p. 270.

In South Korea US military strategy must continue to rely on deployed forces capable of defeating aggression from the North. US air and ground forces should be withdrawn and moved to more threatened areas when South Korean capabilities permit. Ultimate US military strategy in Korea dictates primary reliance on local indigenous forces to withstand both internal subversion and external aggression. This same strategy will have to be applied universally, but only when indigenous capabilities permit. It should remain an announced part of US strategy, even though economic aid and military assistance may be required indefinitely after removal of US forces.

Regarding Japan, the United States must seek to retain air and naval bases and depots in that country for the foreseeable future. Military strategy must continue to deny Japan to Communism, since Communist control of Japanese industrial and manpower assets would represent an unacceptably unfavorable change in the regional balance of power. Okinawa must be retained as a base for regional strategic reserves and prepositioned equipment and supplies. The island countries of the Philippines and Formosa, as long as their governments are non-Communist, can be protected by supplementing their own armed forces with US sea and air power.

Considering the avowed Communist strategy of expansion through "wars of liberation" rather than through more direct aggression, the Far East, while remaining an area of vital US interest, would appear to be relatively secure from regional war unless the

Communists deliberately choose to begin hostilities there in conjunction with other regional conflict as part of a global expansion effort.

CONCURRENT CONFLICTS

It is possible for the United States to be confronted with concurrent limited war. Natural development of events would render this unlikely; but neither Communist strategy nor war is natural.

Strategically, it would be sound policy for the Communist world, were it to choose local war deliberately, to initiate concurrent conflicts if it had the means. The severe impact on US security resources if war in Korea, India, Iran, or Europe were begun while heavy commitments in Vietnam were in effect would pose grave threats to the capability of the United States to protect vital interests in each threatened area. It was largely fear of concurrent conflict elsewhere that caused General Bradley and others to term the war in Korea "the wrong war in the wrong place." Concern for Western Europe and the survival of the collective security system were the strongest factors politically limiting the use of force in Korea by the United Nations Command.⁴³

There are limits to the number of regional wars for which the United States can tolerate concurrent commitment. The enemy is

⁴³Harvey A. DeWeerd, "Historians Perspective," Army, Vol. 13, Jan 1963, p. 45.

also limited in this respect. Assessing Communist capabilities in the Seventies, it appears that the United States must be prepared to wage concurrently two limited wars, and to do so in widely separated regions, initially with forces in being and highly ready reserves. Since it will not be feasible to wage a large-scale regional war or wars and still maintain adequate capability for other contingencies and for deterrence with in-being forces alone, such forces must be reinforced subsequently with the timely (within 30-45 days) addition of sizable general purpose reserve forces. Concurrently the United States must retain general war posture.⁴⁴ Strategic movement capability must be provided to match forces programmed in any combination of two regional war contingency plans. Moreover, mobilization and reserve bases capable of rapid reconstruction of forces and materiel committed in limited war(s) are essential to avoid degradation of general war capabilities.

Concurrent war would be extremely demanding, exacting, and expensive; but it could be the price of executing US policy in opposition to both the other major 1970 world powers.

⁴⁴Kaufman, op. cit., p. 130.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

MILITARY STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES FOR REGIONAL WAR

In formulating specific tenets of military strategy which can demonstrably apply worldwide, it is necessary first to establish strategic concepts which national security policy dictates in pursuing national objectives. Such a strategic concept for regional war is selective containment, supported by a strategy of dynamic stability.

In opposing Communist threats in the 1970's, it will be essential to identify US vital strategic interests in each world region. Regional warfare, with its inherent threat of escalation to general war, should not be accepted unless required to preserve or attain identified vital interests, and even then force should be applied in a manner and on a scale best calculated to prevent hostilities broadening into general war. In some areas, preservation of the status quo will be the best feasible policy; in others, dynamic stability may permit advances to what more conservative strategy would dismiss as unattainable objectives. But these advances must be made short of regional war, or in successfully concluding such a war; advances must never be attempted which would result in regional war.

In the final analysis, the regional war mission is that which applies to any level of intensity in the struggle to meet free world goals; summarized, it is the preservation of peace through deterrent military forces, and, in event of war, the maintenance or restoration, with minimum escalation, of the non-Communist structure in the threatened region.

STRATEGIC TENETS FOR REGIONAL WAR IN THE SEVENTIES

A summary account of important military strategy requirements for five world regions was presented in the previous chapter. From this summary, and from the discussion of regional war which preceded it, certain strategic tenets of general application for regional wars can be synthesized:

1. The first principle of US regional military strategy in the Seventies is that it must be conceived principally to defeat the major threat: Communist-inspired aggression of varying intensities aimed at subverting, isolating, and destroying the countries of the free world.

2. Since no military strategy can be operative without a first priority general war readiness posture, regional war strategy must be considered an essential subsidiary to general war strategy. A primary principle for regional strategy must therefore be continued maintenance, under all conditions, of adequate general war capability.

3. Regional and global balances of power are interdependent. Military strategy must provide for insuring that global or regional power elements, together and separately, remain in balance or develop asymmetries favorable to the United States.

4. In the 1970's the credibility of concurrent limited wars will rise. Considering the anticipated capabilities of the Communist camp, regional war strategy must provide for at least two concurrent limited wars in widely separated areas, while still maintaining contingency reserves and a general war posture.

5. In regional war, the United States will be allied with one or more indigenous powers. Typically, such allies will be engaged in strength in their homeland or adjacent thereto; whereas, smaller US forces will depend on long lines of communication. Regional war strategy therefore dictates mutual security structured on maximum participation of indigenous allied forces and facilities, with alliance forces trained and equipped by the United States, prior to hostilities, wherever necessary and possible.

6. Loss of Western Europe would represent an irreversible unfavorable shift in the world balance of power, far exceeding in magnitude and significance any loss in other areas. Regional strategy must therefore recognize the primacy of maintaining the integrity of NATO Europe, even to the point of strategic compromise in other regions.

7. Regional war will not normally be in US interests because of high costs and the danger of escalation. Recalling that national security policy will prescribe the goals first of deterring war and second of winning any war which becomes necessary at the lowest possible level of intensity, regional war strategy must be based on presenting a globally committed force which exhibits a complete range of integrated, flexible, and credible deterrence in any region or combination of regions.

8. In most world regions, fiscal and political problems of peacetime deployment of US forces will render such deployment on a large scale infeasible. However, there normally are important advantages in some peacetime forward deployment to prevent faits accomplis, acclimatize forces, establish a degree of regional infrastructure, demonstrate the firm purpose of US commitment, and aid in maintenance of security, country building, and stabilization. Accordingly, appropriate US forces with suitable expandable support infrastructure should be deployed forward in areas where the threat of conflict exists.

9. Difficulties of arranging forward deployment in certain distant areas, coupled with the problem of moving strategic reserve forces to these areas from the United States on short notice, dictate creation of regional reserve forces, on land or afloat, as the best available compromise.

10. To execute strategic deployment and subsequent support of sizable forces over long distances in regional conflict, sufficient air and sea power must be provided to control strategic routes to any region of deployment.

11. It will be infeasible to deploy in peacetime sufficient regional war forces of the strengths and types required. Since the greatest opportunity for limiting and terminating regional war depends on rapid initial response leading to quick victory or favorable negotiation, it will be essential to possess extremely responsive strategic mobility capability--air and sea lift--sufficient to move regional or continental US forces on very short notice in conformance to any approved contingency plan. Readiness of mobility elements must be at least equal to that of forces being deployed.

12. In large-scale limited war or in concurrent wars, active duty forces will be inadequate for sustained operations. Regional war strategy will dictate organizing, training, equipping, and maintaining sizable general purpose reserve forces capable of overseas combat deployment within 30-45 days of initial notification.

13. Timely strategic response to regional threats will frequently depend on lift capability for men and equipment. Prepositioning equipment afloat or on land appears feasible on a broadened basis in the future. Therefore, to insure rapid strategic response in regional war, selected equipment and supplies for planned deployment forces should be prepositioned in or near the threatened regions.

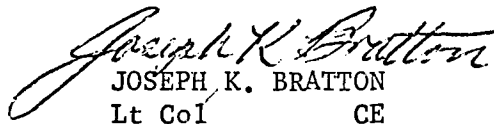
14. Nuclear weapons are so escalatory that strategy should envision their use only in exceptional circumstances. In regional war nuclear weapons for use in or near the battle area should be regionally available but not planned for use, except as directed by proper political authority after the enemy initiates nuclear warfare; integrated force and weapons structures should provide sufficient conventional capability that first use of nuclear weapons should never be required because of military weakness.

15. Because of global US commitments during a period of unprecedented development, opportunities, and change throughout the world, military strategic freedom of action within political constraints must be preserved as a vital interest, with containment and roll-back options left operative in all regions.

16. Forces deployed overseas are normally the minimum necessary for deterrence or defense in their own regions of deployment. Considering the requirement for worldwide deterrence and the possibility of concurrent conflict, forces should not be shifted from one region to another to counter sudden threats; such threats must be met by forces in the threatened region or by uncommitted strategic reserves.

From these tenets, and from the foregoing discussion and conclusions, a final encapsulated statement of strategy for regional war may be made. It embodies strategy based on the alternate means of selective containment and collateral exploitation to support or create dynamic stability, fully consistent with

overall national objectives and national security policy. It is based on a force structure which recognizes the requirements for controlled and flexible response combining long-range retaliatory strike forces, deployed shield forces equipped with a complete armament spectrum, mobile reserves located in the United States and regionally around the globe, an adequate mobilization base, and military assistance programs within a network of mutual security arrangements. Such a comprehensive capability is militarily essential, economically feasible, and politically indispensable. With it, US military strategy can frustrate--by deterrence, indirect means, or military victory--regional Communist thrusts in the decade of the Seventies.


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